

GUIDANCE MEMORANDUM

Ron DeSantis
Governor

DATE: August 17, 2020

Barbara Palmer
Director

TO: APD Licensed Homes

State Office

FROM: Clarence Lewis, Deputy Director of Operations

SUBJECT: Assisting Group Home Residents with Transitioning Back to School

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Residents of APD-licensed homes who attend school have remained in self-quarantine over the past several months to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

School-aged residents of APD-licensed homes have options in regard to school attendance. In addition, schools and districts in Florida have developed individual plans for reopening in Fall 2020. Facility operators should familiarize themselves with the reopening plans of the schools in their area so that they are able to help residents, parents, and legal guardians prepare for the return to school.

Important actions facility operators should take in helping residents prepare to return to school:

1. Find out from the resident's parent or legal guardian if the resident will be returning to a school building or choosing a distance learning option. The choice of options is the sole responsibility of the parent or legal guardian.
2. For residents returning to school campuses:
 - Review the school-specific reopening plans to help residents understand what to expect.
 - Provide age and developmentally appropriate information to residents about social distancing while at school.
 - Ask the school questions to help prepare the resident including:
 - Will the school require masks during all or certain times of the day? If so, does the resident require an accommodation or exemption due to medical, sensory, or behavioral reasons? Will the school be providing the masks?

- Will the school perform temperature checks at the beginning of the day? If a temperature is detected, what is the school's policy for when a student can return to school after having a fever?
- How will exceptional student education services be delivered for individuals with an Individual Education Plan (IEP)?
- What are the requirements for students using school transportation such as buses?

What if a resident is exposed to COVID-19 at school?

The facility operator should inquire as to how the school will communicate with them when another student, teacher, or staff in the school tests positive for COVID-19. If a resident comes into close contact with another student, teacher or staff who has tested positive for COVID-19, it is critical for the facility operator to take immediate steps to limit that resident's exposure to facility staff and other residents.

Facility operators who suspect that a resident has COVID-19 should report this information to the APD Regional office, the school, and the [county health department](#). They should also notify the Waiver Support Coordinator for assistance in ensuring that the resident's needs are met.

In cases where the resident tests positive for COVID-19, the facility operator should follow the [CDC requirements](#) for caring for someone who is sick at home including ensuring that proper PPE is used (including an N95 mask, gown and gloves). Gloves should be changed after each direct contact with a resident.

For more information concerning COVID-19, please visit the [Florida Department of Health](#) website and the [CDC's website](#).